

Squaw Valley to pay tribute to Jimmie Heuga

By Amelia Richmond

On March 6, Squaw Valley celebrates the life of Jimmie Heuga.

His life, his accomplishments and the strength he showed in demonstrating to others how to live with MS are an inspiration to all who knew him. The celebration will begin at 4pm on the KT Sundeck.



Billy Kidd, left, and Jimmie Heuga on the cover of Sports Illustrated in 1968.

The son of Pascal "Pete" Heuga, one of Squaw Valley's first employees, Jimmie has always been a beloved member of Squaw Valley. His natural talent first captured the attention of Squaw Valley's ski school director at age 8, and that was just the beginning. Jimmie went on to an amazing skiing career, winning the bronze medal in the Men's slalom in the 1964 Olympics.

When Jimmie was diagnosed with MS in 1970, his doctors told him to live a sedentary lifestyle. Many years later, he

rejected his doctors' advice and found that swimming, biking and skiing made him feel better and helped him to regain his health. Jimmie founded The Heuga Center in 1984 to share what he had discovered with others struggling with the disease.

The Center's CAN DO programs are based around this philosophy that people with MS are helped by exercise. This wellness approach to MS, which focuses on what people with MS can do rather than what they can't do, is now widely embraced by the medical community. Jimmie will be sorely missed but his spirit lives on in the Center's work and in all of us who have been inspired by him.

Squaw Valley will be celebrating Jimmie Heuga's life this during the Vertical Express for MS.

Speakers at the event will include Nancy Cushing (Squaw Valley CEO), Tamara KcKinney, Robert Frohlich and Lily Kunczynski (childhood friend) and Art Domingue (pastor of the Squaw Valley Chapel). A reception will follow in the VTL for family and friends. In the event of weather, the entire event will be moved into VTL.

Amelia Richmond is an employee of Squaw Valley.